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U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk is calling for a national ban on the use of double-deck trailers for the transportation of horses following an accident in Wadsworth last October that killed 19 Belgian draft horses.

Kirk is scheduled to address his proposed legislation, the Horse Transportation Safety Act of 2008, at an appearance in Mettawa Monday.

In October, a double-deck cattle truck carrying 59 Belgian draft horses overturned when the driver ran a red light and hit another vehicle on Route 41. Eight horses died at the scene, and another 10 had to be euthanized.

Double-deck trailers, like the one involved in that crash, are designed to transport pigs and other farm animals, Kirk said, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture has taken the position that such trailers cannot transport horses safely.

On average, one major accident involving the transportation of horses in double-deck trailers occurs each year.

Kirk's bill would prohibit interstate transportation of horses in a motor vehicle containing two or more levels. The legislation also outlines civil penalties for violations of the ban.

The legislation is endorsed by The Humane Society, Animal Welfare Institute, Hooved Animal Rescue and Protection Society, and Communication Alliance to Network Thoroughbred Ex-Racehorses.